
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	1401 New York Avenue, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Hecht Company Warehouse		Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	May 2, 2013	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	13-065		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		Demolition
			Subdivision

Antunovich Associates Architects, representing Douglas Development, returns for ongoing conceptual review for construction of a six-story parking garage adjacent to the Hecht Company Warehouse.

At the February meeting, the Board found the general height, mass and footprint of the proposed garage to be compatible with the adjacent landmark, and found the removal of a one-story 1961 wing to the warehouse for the garage construction to not compromise the integrity of the landmark as long as its glazed brick base was recreated as part of the new garage. The Board recommended elimination of an elevated pedestrian bridge that spanned over the new mid-block road through the site, that the corners of the garage were too heavy, that the garage was too horizontal and needed to be balanced with vertical elements, and that further development was needed for the landscape, plaza, canopies and storefronts.

Revised Proposal

The proposal has been revised to eliminate the elevated pedestrian bridge and to recreate, rather than attempt to retain, the 1961 glazed brick wall as the base of the garage. The corner towers on New York Avenue have been somewhat simplified in design, each with a single vertical “shoulder” element; the central tower on the new through-street has also been redesigned with central vertical elements rather than the more classical piers of the previous design. The arch over the new road has been redesigned as two free standing illuminated pylons.

The storefront base of the garage has been refined, now including a low black marble base and black metal framing with horizontal transoms. The storefront canopy would be a single continuous element defining the top of the storefront base of the building, with rounded corners and incised speed lines.

The public space treatment has also been revised to include pedestrian bulb-outs at the intersections, and contemporary street lighting, tree boxes, and street furniture.

Evaluation

The revisions improve the compatibility and design quality of the proposal. In a series of thoughtful suggestions provided by the Art Deco Society, the applicants are looking at some minor refinements to the corner towers to make them slightly thinner and less bulky, which should continue to be evaluated.

The updated conceptual plans for the building base and storefronts, canopy element, entrance piers, and street furniture are all more consistent with the character of the site. The sidewalk paving around the garage is alternatively shown as red (brick?) in the renderings and taupe (concrete or pavers?) in the plans; as red brick is not found at this complex and more commonly associated today with 19th century streetscapes, a color and material that is complementary to (rather than contrasting with) the buildings is recommended.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the revised concept for the garage to be compatible with the character of the landmark and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff.